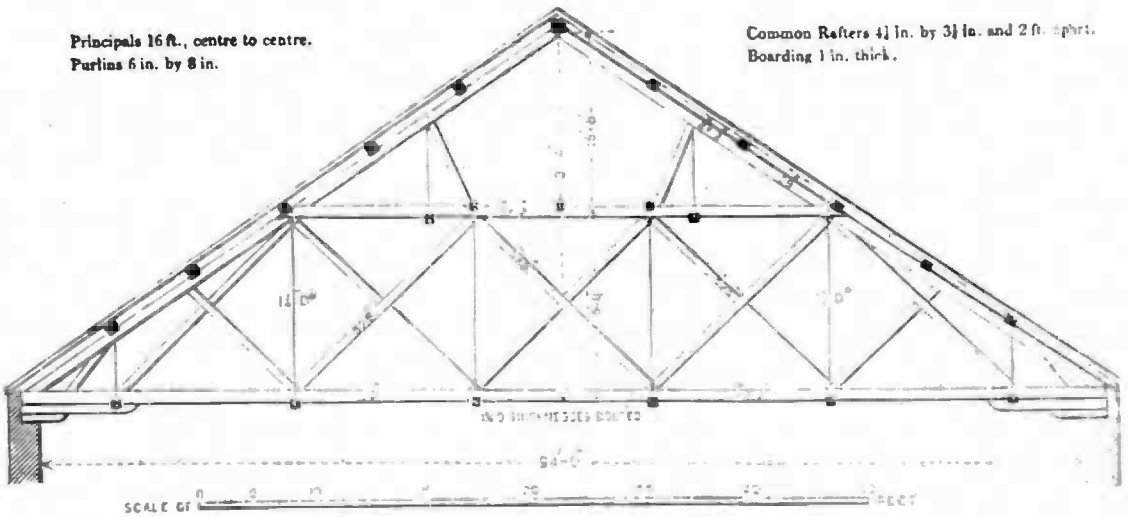
ROOF OVER BOSTON DEPOT OF BOSTON AND ALBANY RAILWAY.



ROOF OF THE BOSTON AND ALBANY RAILWAY.

This roof is a very good specimen of American carpentry. It is remarkable on the score of the simplicity of its framing, and the co-relation of the scantlings to those of the lumber brought to Boston.

It must be borne in mind, in examining any American construction, that the price of skilled labour is so high, that the efforts of their architects and engineers are always directed to simplify the mechanical execution. We must not then seek for elaborate framing, nor economy of material. The price of the latter is often insignificant when compared with that of its conversion; but in all cases the scantlings are made to suit those of the usual supply.

This roof is covered with Welch slates, and it has often to support a great weight of snow.

ON THE LIFE, THE GENIUS, AND THE WORKS OF GIACOMO BAROZZI DA VIGNOLA.*

Upon the principle so well laid down by Milizia, "That the best method of praising able artists is by making known their works," I will now proceed with a few remarks upon the executed works of Vignola at Rome, commencing with the little church of Sant. Andrea a Ponte Molle, on the Via Flaminia.

The building was erected by Julius III., in commemoration of his escape on St. Andrew's day, 1527, from the German soldiery during the sack of Rome; and among the various inscriptions in the adjoining Villa di Papa Giulio, Boissard gives the following as connected with this church:—"In the neighbouring temple let thanks be given to God and St. Andrew; and let them (the visitors) pray for abundant health and eternal life to Julius III., Pontifex Maximus, to Baldwin his brother, and to their whole family."

This church is of a rectangular plan, of very moderate dimensions, and is chiefly remarkable for its resemblance in general exterior character to some of the small Roman temples. There is a great charm and beauty in the simplicity of the design, and the elegant details all bespeak the most careful study. Milizia in his brusque way has some smart criticisms upon it, acknowledging at the same time that it was a work generally praised.

In the immediate vicinity of the church of St. Andrea is situate the Villa Papa Giulio, commenced in 1550, by order of Julius III. I will not occupy the time of this meeting by a description of this building,—with which, probably, nearly all present are familiar,—either with the building itself, or the charming illustrations of it by Percier and Fontaine. I cannot, however, resist the observation that for the harmonious arrangement of the plan, for its style and character, for the refinement and delicacy of the enrichments, it is a model of suburban architecture. Ammanati in his fountains and ninfeo, and Zucchero in his beautiful paintings of the porticoes, have contributed much to its effect, but it is to the master-hand of Vignola, which guided and directed the whole, that we must award the palm.

My friend, Mr. James Morant Lockyer, who has with great credit given much attention to the study of numismatics, more particularly in reference to architectural representations upon medals, has kindly lent me a medal of Julius III., engraved both in Stern's and Letarouilly's works, upon which the Villa Papa Giulio is shown with two small cupolas surmounting the circular staircase and corresponding wing building. The effect in the medal is so successful, that I am induced to wish these lateral cupolas had been introduced in the building itself.

Near to the Villa Papa Giulio is the Vigna Giulia, and from their close vicinity and the resemblance in the names, the one building has sometimes been taken for the other in the works of Vasari and other authors. I am inclined to think the hand of Vignola may be traced on this latter building; it is an extremely picturesque composition, and quite worthy of him. Letarouilly has treated this subject in his usual perfect manner, and he ascribes the design to Sansovino and Peruzzi. Giorgio Vasari states that he himself was the first who designed it, adding rather indignantly, "that he was not one of those who made designs to please the capricious fancy of the Pope, and which were afterwards obliged to be corrected by Michelangelo and Vignola." From this passage it would almost appear that Barozzi was really concerned in the design, but I have no doubt so careful an author as Letarouilly has good reasons for attributing the work to Sansovino and Peruzzi, and I am only doing justice to these two great architects in observing that the work in question is, at all events, worthy of Vignola. The Villa Lanti, at Bagnaia, near to Viterbo, has also been ascribed to Vignola: it resembles his style, but it is not sufficiently refined and pure for that master.

At the Palazzo Farnese, Vignola executed the magnificent apartment so well known as the Caracci Gallery, with a portion of the Cortile, together with the decorations of several doors and windows, the most satisfactory details of which will be found in Letarouilly, who has also given as the works of Vignola the lateral porticoes or loggie on the Capitol, the small Palazzo Spada in the Via di Capo di Ferro, the Palazzo Nari, and a small palace at the extremity of the Piazza Navona. We have also the celebrated doorway of "San Lorenzo in Damaso."

In reference to the entrance to the Farnese Gardens at Rome, I will again refer to the useful work on doorways by Professor Donaldson: "It is useful, however, to consider whether this is an example to be entirely followed without reserve; certainly not; but there are so few blemishes to remark, that it may appear almost unnecessary to notice them. It must be allowed, however, that the columns require being elevated above the level of the ground by a plinth. The rustications of the columns may be somewhat objected to as not sufficiently pure, but the harmony of the whole composition would have been destroyed had they been without: the attic is not sufficiently high,—its proper proportions would have been to have equalled the entablature in height; this would have raised the plinth more above the cornice, and prevented its being intercepted by the projection of the latter. Some subsequent architect, with a taste as profane as it was daring, has introduced above this capo d'opera of Vignola an attic, with caryatides, deteriorating materially its effect, and causing the deformity to be attributed to our great architect."

Now Milizia, who is generally not very sparing in his censure, is not quite so indignant as the writer whom I have just quoted with respect to this "profane addition:" he merely says, "Ma l'attico con quelle cariatidi è troppo grande," and upon referring to my own rough notes I find that I was innocent enough to treat it as one design. Many, however, I dare say, will consider that the author of the work on doorways has, in this instance, proved himself the best critic of the three, and that the addition must consequently be condemned as—

> "A blot that will be still a blot, in spite
> Of all that grave apologists may write."

At the death of Michelangelo, in 1564, Vignola, in conjunction with Pirro Ligorio, was elected as his successor as architect to St. Peter's, with the strictest injunctions from Pius IV. not in any way to alter the design made by Michelangelo. Vignola's coadjutor, however, thought proper to disobey these commands, in consequence of which he was dismissed, and Vignola remained as sole architect, and he so continued for the space of nine years, up to the time of his death. The lateral cupolas are his, and are well worthy of his master-hand. Milizia's praise of them is as concise as it is expressive,—"Sono del Vignola e sono belle!" I am inclined to the opinion that no other part of St. Peter's was designed by Vignola, but that he merely put in execution the designs of his great predecessor.

Through the patronage of Cardinals Alexandro Farnese, Vignola was appointed architect to design the important church of the Jesuits. This great work was commenced in 1568: its

* See page 74 *ante*.

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